REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1-3 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,946,023 to Heinold et al. (hereinafter "Heinold") in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,492,168 to Cellai (hereinafter "Cellai").

Claims 4-12 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 14-17 are allowed.

Summary of the Interview

The Office Action dated November 1, 2007 has been carefully considered. Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the courtesy of the January 23, 2008 telephone interview between Examiner McCarry and Applicant's attorneys John Conklin and Dimitry Kapmar. During the interview, Applicant discussed with the Examiner differences between the stop means used to form a train of trucks contacting one another, as recited in claim 1, and wheels of Cellai, including flanges 27 and elastic coating 28. The Applicant pointed out that the flanges 27 and elastic coating 28 form a guidance groove for the powered wheels of Cellai that roll along a cable, thereby improving adhesion of the wheels to the cable and helping to propel, rather than stop, the truck of Cellai. Therefore, an agreement was reached that "[t]his 'stop means' as interpreted by the Examiner is used to stop slippage of the wheels on the cable and is not intended to be used as a stop means to create a line of trucks as recited by the Applicant." See Examiner Interview Summary dated January 28, 2008.

For the reasons discussed below in more detail, this application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration in light of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Status of the Application

Claims 1-17 are pending and presented for examination. No amendments are being made in this response.

Discussion

Independent claim 1 pertains to an integrated conveyor system comprising a number of trucks and a number of independent modules. As recited in claim 1, each of the number of trucks within the conveyor system includes "stop means for forming ... a train of trucks contacting one another." See Application, page 9, lines 17-24. As illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 of the application, each of the trucks 5 comprises a stop means, which, in one embodiment, includes longitudinal bars 26 contacting adjacent longitudinal bars 26 on immediately following and preceding trucks 5, thereby forming a "train of carriages contacting one another". Id; Figures 1, 2.

In contrast to the invention as expressed by independent claim 1, neither Heinold, nor Cellai teaches nor suggests the stop means located on each of the trucks for forming a train of trucks contacting one another. In fact, unlike the Applicant's stop means, the asserted combination of trucks or trolleys of Heinold and flanges of Cellai results in an apparatus that helps to propel, rather than stop the trucks.

Specifically, Cellai teaches a self-propelled device traveling along a cable line for transporting loads or pulling other cables. See Cellai, col. 1, lines 55-60. The Office Action states and the Applicant agrees that Heinold does not teach the stop means of claim 1. However, the Office action points to the flanges 27 and elastic coating 28 of Figure 3 of Cellai as showing "the stopping device of the assembly." Office Action at p. 4. However, flanges 27 of Cellai serve to create a clamping force on the contact surfaces between the cable and the wheels riding on the cable, so as to "obtain perfect adhesion of the driving wheels on the cable 1." See Cellai, col. 4, lines 61-68; col. 5, line 1. The wheels of the self-propelled device of Cellai are powered via an internal combustion engine 24 and roll along a cable 1. See Cellai, col. 2, lines 61-62; col. 3, line 53. Hence, the wheels of Cellai include a guidance groove for the cable. In the

embodiment of Figure 3, the guidance groove includes two flanges 27 and elastic coating 28 for improving the adhesion of the driving wheels to the cable, thereby *minimizing slippage of the powered wheels along the cable and helping to propel or speed up, rather than stop, the truck of Cellai.* Therefore, Cellai, like Heinold, is also missing the stop means of claim 1.

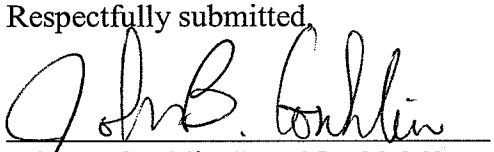
Hence, the asserted references, alone or in combination, lack the "stop means for forming ... a train of trucks contacting one another" as recited in independent claim 1.

Likewise, dependent claims 2-13 incorporate all the requirements of their parent claim 1 and are patentable for at least the same reasons.

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that the patent application is in condition for allowance. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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